

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (previously presented): A digital communication device comprising a plurality of interconnected modules for processing and handling received data signals, wherein said interconnected modules each comprise monitoring means for monitoring whether said data signal is erroneous without manipulating or analyzing bits or bytes of said data signal, and for generating an output data signal having a predetermined signal status if said data signal is erroneous.

2. (previously presented): The digital communication device according to claim 1, characterized by comprising:

a first I/O module for receiving a data signal and transmitting two copies of said data signal

at least two interconnected modules for processing said data signal, wherein a first group of said interconnected modules receiving said first copy of said data signal and a second group of said interconnected modules receiving said second copy of said data signal; and

a second I/O module for receiving said copies of the data signal transmitted by said interconnected modules, said second I/O module comprising means for monitoring said received copies of said data signal and transmitting those copy of said data signal which has not said predetermined signal status.

3. (previously presented): The communication device according to claim 1, wherein said monitoring means comprises a threshold detector.

4. (previously presented): The communication device according to claim 1, wherein said monitoring means comprises a frequency detector.

5. (previously presented): The communication device according to claim 1, which it is a cross-connect device and wherein said interconnected modules are switching matrix components.

6. (previously presented): The communication device according to claim 1, wherein said predetermined signal status of said output data signal is zero.

7. (previously presented): The communication device according to claim 2, wherein said first I/O module comprises monitoring means for monitoring said received data signal and for generating an output data signal having a predetermined signal status if said received data signal is erroneous.

8. (previously presented): The communication device according to claim 2, wherein said first I/O module receives a copy of the data signal via a protection line and comprises monitoring means for monitoring said received data signal supplied via a working line and for transmitting said copy of said data signal if said received data signal is erroneous.

9. (currently amended): The method for processing a data signal within a communication device, comprising the steps of:

- receiving an input data signal;
- checking the input data signal whether it is erroneous without manipulating or analyzing bits or bytes of said input data signal;
- if the input data signal is erroneous, generating a data signal with a predetermined signal status, and
- transmitting said data signal as an output data signal.

10. (previously presented): The method according to claim 9, wherein the step of verifying said input data signal comprises checking a frequency of said input data signal.

11. (previously presented): The method according to claim 9, wherein the step of verifying said input data signal comprises checking a signal level and comparing the signal level with a threshold value.

12. (previously presented): The method according to claim 9, wherein said output data signal is checked whether it has said predetermined signal status, and if so, a copy of said input data signal is transmitted as said output data signal.